

# Crime and Punishment in Latin America



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著者:Salvatore, Ricardo D. (EDT)/ Aguirre, Carlos (EDT)/ Joseph, Gilbert M. (EDT)

出版者:

出版时间:2001-9

装帧:

isbn:9780822327349

Representing a new wave of legal history that has emerged in recent years, "Crime and Punishment in Latin America" presents unique essays about the relationship between ordinary people and the law. While applying disparate methodological, theoretical, and disciplinary traditions, the contributors share the conviction that law and legal phenomena are crucial elements in the formation and functioning of modern Latin American societies. Influenced by various theoretical developments, including the rise of cultural, subaltern, and postcolonial studies, the new brand of legal history found in this volume rejects assumptions about the normativity of elite privilege and the law's straightforward application of 'justice'. While disassociating law from a strict and reductionist legalist approach, the volume showcases discussions of a range of cultures by scholars from both North and Latin America who consider, among other topics, the role of law in mediating social conflict and participating in state building. Treating law as an ambiguous and malleable realm of struggle, the contributors demonstrate that law not only produces and reformulates culture but

shapes and is shaped by larger processes of political, social, economic, and cultural change. Other topics discussed include the need for more studies on women's shifting legal status and the ways in which legal systems in England, Western Europe, and the United States compares to those in Latin American countries. This volume will appeal to scholars in Latin American studies and to those interested in the social and cultural history of law. The contributors include: Carlos Aguirre, Dain Borges, Lila Caimari, Arlene J. Diaz, Luis A. Gonzalez, Donna Guy, Douglas Hay, Gilbert M. Joseph, Juan Manuel Palacio, Diana Paton, Pablo Piccato, Cristina Rivera-Garza, Kristin Ruggiero, Ricardo D. Salvatore, and, Charles Walker.

作者介绍:

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